

THE EVER

Saturday, March 23, 1867.



(Drawn by C. GREEN.)

"There he is!" she cried, pointing with her finger above the crowd."—p. 420.

THE HISTORY OF CICELY AVERELL.—II.

BY THE HON. MRS. R. J. GREENE, AUTHOR OF "CUSHIONS AND CORNERS," ETC.

CICELY looked up from her book with a start to find she had been betrayed, and that her brother stood over her with a scowl that foreboded more than a common outbreak of anger.

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He lifted the open book from before her with an imprecation, and smote her twice on the face with its hard wooden binding, then flung it across the room, so that, striking against the beams overhead,

it fell, with its leaves in sore confusion, on the top of an old and dusty chest.

"So, wench, thou wouldest turn heretic! I know thy ways; and yonder lying knave shall answer to me for this. Thou thinkest I will not denounce thee, because thou art my kin; but if I catch thee again at this wickedness, thou shalt for certain share the fate that awaits thy devil's tutor!"

"What is that?" asked Cicely, with awakened spirit.

"Thou shalt burn."

"And if I were to burn, I know no better cause," she said, with uplifted face.

"Answer me—answer me!" he repeated, shaking her with unbrotherly violence: "art thou a heretic or not?"

She was silent, and persisted in her silence.

Then Richard stamped on the ground till the old wooden boards trembled, and shaking his hand at the closed window opposite, poured forth a torrent of threats against John Harrison, calling him many vile names, and promising, with oaths, to bring about his speedy destruction—oaths which Cicely well knew he had it in his heart and power to accomplish.

She made, however, no offer at intercession, nor sought to deny that her faith in her creed was shaken. Her proud spirit was grievously wounded at the treatment she had received, and at the trap which she felt sure had been set to ensnare her.

Richard, finding all arguments useless, returned to his first and most terrible threat, and swore, with a solemnity that left no loophole for after-repentance, and with a voice purposely raised to a loud and violent key, "that if she would not give up her new-fangled notions and false heretical theories, he himself, before the week was out, would bring her before the authorities of the great City of London, and there, if imprisonment and torture failed in making her confess, she should perish miserably, as hundreds had perished before her."

When he was gone, Cicely raised up her head, and passed her hand over her bruised and blistered cheek. She looked across the street at the curtained window, with a scared, appealing glance; then paced her room with clasped hands and meaningless, hasty steps, for life was young and sweet still to the poor girl, and the thought of death most terrible. She tried to open the door, but found it locked; then, looking through a crack in the wooden framework, she perceived Edward Pierce set in guard over her door, and smiling to himself over her fruitless efforts. She hurried again to the window and looked down into the narrow street. Her face was becoming almost wild, and her thoughts ran forward to her threatened fate, like a horse that has lost its rider.

There was a knock at her door; she turned

round quickly, and heard Pierce's voice, in low tones, addressing her.

"Mistress Cicely, say, I pray thee, if there is any way I can be of service to thee, and, if it be possible, I will accomplish it."

"Let me out, then; quick, I say."

"Nay, nay, that I durst not do; but if thou wilt, I can take a message from thee to Master Richard, which may appease his wrath, and, perhaps, turn him from his purpose; and if I speak my own words, and say that which seemeth best to my own mind, then need it not touch thy conscience in any manner."

Cicely turned disdainfully from the door.

Thus the days passed heavily on. She partook of almost no food, and went from deep gloom into sudden fits of terror. As the evening of the last closed in, her nerves gave way. She threw herself on her bed; she rose again, and flung open her casement. Could no one in the street outside save her? But the street was silent as death; not the sound of a step or the echo of a human voice.

"Must I die—must I come to this dreadful end? Can no one save me?" she screamed to the dead wall and curtained window opposite.

Pierce heard her cry without, and called to her once more, and fear for a moment made her yield her attention to his words; but while she listened to his oft-repeated overtures, there was a grating sound at her window of something being pushed forward on the stone outside; one of the white rose-pots rolled upon its side, and threatened to fall inward with a crash. It was well Edward Pierce was pre-occupied with his own entreaties, for in another moment the casement was darkened, and John Harrison entered the room.

He beckoned Cicely towards him, and pointed to the perilous bridge by which he had crossed over—a bridge consisting of but two rough planks coarsely joined together.

"Art thou afraid?" he whispered. She clung to his arm, but made no reply.

"Cicely, dear heart! thou joy and love that God has given me! art thou afraid to go with me and share my lot?"

And she, looking up in his face, said, quietly, "I am not; I will share it, even unto death."

With a perfect trust in him from that moment out, she suffered him to tie a handkerchief over her eyes, and lead her across the few steps which measured the perilous bridge.

Scarcely had she passed in safety to the opposite house than Pierce knocked loudly at her door, bidding her make ready, as her brother was saddling the horses in the courtyard. She gave no answer, nor, though he placed his eye to the fissure, could he discern the dim outline of her figure. At ten of the clock, Richard, accoutred for travel, and with a face black as midnight—

the more so to frighten his sister to the uttermost—strode up the creaking stairs. The moon was shining, bright and clear, through the open window on the worm-eaten boards at his feet; but Cicely Averell was gone!

Either Pierce had proved a false gaoler, and she had fled into the fields or open country for safety; or, wild with fear, she had made a perilous entry into the house opposite.

The first supposition, Pierce, on his knees, denied with perfect sincerity; and the second proved the most probable, for the white rose-trees on the window-sill were bent and pushed aside, and the glass in the casement was broken.

The horses which Richard had saddled and prepared, were now employed to scour the country in search of the fugitives; for John Harrison was gone also, and the old twin house deserted.

The search proved fruitless. Week after week went by, month after month; and at the end of two long years Richard began to see that, in his fanatical zeal, he had outstripped the bounds both of brotherly love and religious discretion.

Vague regrets for the lost sister's love haunted him, dim misgivings for having pushed a pure young soul into a step either desperate or dark, and secret hopes that at some day, perhaps not far distant, she would steal in under cover of the old roof, and ask for a brother's protection.

But not one feeling save revenge arose in his breast for John Harrison, the traitor heretic; and the opportunity, long sought for, came at last, and unexpectedly.

Walking one evening in the suburbs of London—where he had for some weeks past taken up his residence—he noticed a figure turn down a side lane, leading behind a brewery into a covered close beyond. There was something so timid and fearful in its gait that his suspicions were aroused, and he withdrew into the shadow of an empty vat to watch more closely. After a moment of hesitation, the figure opened a side door, leading into the close, and passed inside. Presently came four or five men, who, walking stealthily through this brewery yard, passed in at the same door, with the same wary gestures and noiseless, gliding step. Then Richard, coming out of the darkness, and wrapping his cloak about his head as the others had done, followed after them, and entered the shed boldly.

At first, so great was the darkness, he could discern nothing save the figure of a man, somewhat raised above the level of the ground, holding a candle in one hand and a book in the other. The light fell full upon his face, which was pale even to ghastliness, and the features were those of John Harrison.

Richard's entrance had either not been observed, or his appearance had attracted no suspicion, so

he seated himself on the ground as a listener, and gradually observed head after head shaping itself out of the darkness, and men's and women's faces bent eagerly forward to catch the words which fell from their teacher's lips.

Richard soon saw enough to satisfy himself that he had stumbled on a nest of "heretics;" and that he had also now within his certain grasp the enemy he had so assiduously sought.

He went out noiselessly, and going up the lane to the main street of the suburb, summoned with haste the constable of the town, four or five soldiers, and a dozen or more of his friends. These latter surrounded the building, while the soldiers, with bill and bow, guarded the doorways.

Then Richard Averell walked boldly into the midst of the group, and going up to the bench on which stood John Harrison, still holding the Bible in his hand, and reading aloud its contents, he blew out the light, and seizing his enemy by his gown and throat, dragged him through the terrified congregation into the lane outside.

The rest, numbering two or three and twenty, were soon made prisoners within, or caught by the soldiers at the doorway; only one woman, with a child in her arms, rushed, with a wild cry, from the grasp of the man who held her, and passing through the dark intricacies of the brewery-yard, made her escape.

Nine long weeks Richard waited in the great city for the trial of John Harrison to begin, that he might bear witness against him; but then was fain to return to his own home, for his business was fast declining under the careless management of Edward Pierce.

The mob in London had begun to shudder at the number of burnings, hangings, and quarterings which had taken place within the city, and to sympathise openly with the victims, so that the bishop durst not for a while make a fresh holocaust.

Meantime, Richard dismissed Pierce from his service, and set to work to purchase fresh goods, and to beautify his shop; for, miserable and lonely at heart, he still vaguely hoped for the return of his lost sister.

The twin house opposite grew daily more gloomy and desolate-looking, as its brother grew fresh and clean. No one ever went in and out of its doors, save the lonely old woman, who from time immemorial had been the servant of the Harrisons.

Marvel therefore seized upon Richard Averell, when, standing one morning at the window of the garret, through which his sister had passed out in her despair, he heard the ringing laugh of a child within the room opposite, and saw for one instant the curtain withdrawn by a dimpled

baby-hand, and followed by the vision of a baby's face.

Both were withdrawn at once, and he could trace the figure of a woman bearing the child away; but the face remained for ever on his mind, like the ghost of his lost sister Cicely come back to haunt him.

The child never appeared at the window again; nor for a month was there any further stir in the old house, till one night, lying in his bed with his window open, for the air was close, he heard the sound of a woman's voice singing plaintively, and the wail of a child in pain. He arose and looked up at the casement high above his head. A few inches had been opened to let in air, for he could hear between the verses of the hymn which the woman was singing, her soothing words of comfort. All night Richard listened with straining ears, but towards morning both the wail and the song had ended.

The next night Richard made no pretence of going to bed, but watched hour after hour in the darkness. Towards early dawn he saw a light for a moment carried across the room opposite, and then blown suddenly out. A few minutes later there was a creaking sound of the shop door beneath being opened, and two figures, carrying something between them, glided along the covered gallery down the street. He guessed their sad errand, and determined to follow them at a distance, to see the matter to the end.

But he was late, and ere he gained the level of the street, and crossed over, they were lost to sight.

At length, they came in view again, this time walking with less agitated steps. The first was the aged servant of the Harrisons, who clambered up the steps of the gallery, with the iron key of the house-door in her hand. She tottered hurriedly past; but when the second figure drew near, Richard stood up across her path, and stopped her. "Cicely, come home with me; you must come back to the old house to-night."

Cicely stretched out her hand to clasp one of the pillars which supported the building above, and leaned against the balcony.

"The old house!" she said, with a kind of piteous look at the twin house opposite; then laying her hand on her brother's arm, sorrowfully, she said, "No, Richard; my child is gone from me, and I have no further wish to be in this world. I must even now make my way to the city, and there end my days with him who first taught me the way of life."

Richard again besought of her to come back with him, but she was not to be moved from the fixed purpose which she seemed to have formed in her mind—a purpose which her brother could not comprehend aright, as his evidence up to this time had not been produced against her husband.

It needed but small evidence in those days to bring poor wretches to their death.

The next day, openly, Cicely hired a horse, and took the road towards London. She seemed afraid of nothing now—neither of pursuers nor death. Richard insisted on accompanying her, and rode by her side, marvelling for what exact purpose she made so hurried a journey.

That night they slept at an inn near unto the east end of the town, and Cicely was up by four in the morning, and resumed her way on foot. She seemed to know it well, for she threaded the narrow streets with a feverish haste, which kept her brother at a distance.

Richard soon became convinced there was something unusual going forward in this quarter of the town, and began to guess its origin, for people were already beginning to file down the alleys which led to the Smithfield market-place.

Here his sister's steps slackened, so that he overtook her, and she leaned upon his arm, for they could see as they entered the open space, through the foggy air, and over the heads of the surging crowd, the stakes already erected for the new heretic sacrifice. Nearer still as they approached they could distinguish even the forms of the victims.

"I see him! there—there he is!" she cried, pointing with her finger over the crowd. And she tried to free her arm from her brother's grasp.

"What wouldest thou? Art thou mad?" he cried. "I will not have thy blood, too, at my door!"

But she broke from him, and struggling through the people, till she stood almost within the circle, exclaimed, with upthrown arms, "Make way, prithee, good people; make way, that I may see him, for I, too, am a heretic!"

The crowd opened and let her pass on; but rough men seized her when within a few feet of the stake, and, obeying the orders of their officials, dragged her across the fagots, and out of her husband's sight.

The groans of the sympathising crowd rose high; but higher still rose Cicely's appeal and protestation—"Good people, prithee, let me die with him, for I, too, am a heretic!"

The order was given to put the fire to the fagots. A recantation had been indignantly refused by the victims. When as the torch was actually being lighted, a messenger rushed to the priest's side, and whispered some wild words in his ear.

"Hush!" said the astonished priest, in a low tone; "I tell thee we stand on a mine, and thy message is fire!" That whisper was taken up by the nearest, and passed about through the crowd, till at length there rose a shout, "The queen is dead! the queen is dead!"

A tumult of dark figures rushed in, and closed up the void space in a moment. The fagots were tossed in the air, the prisoners unbound, and the kindling fire trampled into darkness. The reign of blood was ended!

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The twin houses still stand opposite each other. But before Cicely's life was closed, the old Bible had been lifted down from the dusty shelf by the same hand that had cast it there, and the households had become of one mind and of one faith.

A WORD UPON SPOILING THINGS.

BY THE REV. W. M. STATHAM.

SOME children have this propensity to a degree. They will let the bran out of a doll, and the sand out of a sack, in a jiffey. Perhaps you will say, as the partial parents always do, that this is a noble trait of their nature—a manifestation of the wisely inquisitive spirit, which will bear precious fruit in future days. But whatever may be your opinion as to the genius of the children, you cannot dispute the fact that the toys are spoiled. Now it seems to me that we children of a larger growth are often quite as blameworthy as the little ones. We sometimes spoil a dinner-party by self-assertion and argumentation. We sometimes spoil a beautiful country walk by grumbling at the mud; or we spoil a neighbour's happiness by interjecting into the conversation something that will discompose and discomfort him. I am not sure that there is not a race who might be called "spoilers," just as there existed once on our coasts a company of men called wreckers. I mean those who wilfully do damage to their brethren in the world. I have heard of cases of insanity which take the forms of destructiveness, and I have been told of pictures being defaced by being smudged, and works of art being scratched by pins in a sly and surreptitious way. This may be a very great pity; but the greater pity in such a case is the mental malady which has touched the organ of destructiveness so powerfully. A spoiled portrait is to be regretted; but it is nothing, after all, to spoiling a character, and that is no uncommon thing. Oh! my friend, you know that favourable likeness of yourself which you keep in the casket of your own heart! Perhaps, on the whole, it is a very flattering one. Well, there is another likeness hanging in the outward world—not quite, perchance, so fair and flattering, still it has a look of honour and truth about it,—well, it is not very comforting to think that there are people who will take positive trouble to spoil it, who will give it a smudge every now and then out of sheer envy or dislike. Such, however, will be the case, and you will have to endure it, only take care when you feel the uncomfortableness of it that you never spoil a brother or a sister's portrait, that you never shrug your shoulders, or look knowing, when

anything is said to their detriment or dishonour. By the way, is it not a sad thing that there should be the word "spoiler" in our vocabulary at all? We should not have the word if we had not the thing. No age or race ever coins a word without a use for it. Where the word-symbol is, we never have to look far for the thing signified. Here is an old Hebrew word, which has a place in every vocabulary under heaven. No land is so sea-begirt or land-locked as to shut out the fleets of the despoiler! We may turn our eye to Sin, and see how *that* despoils our world, and how all envies, jealousies, and wrongs, spring out of that! You cannot cast your eye upon any one province of this beautiful world without saying, There are the spoiler's armics, there are his fleets, there are his devastations, there are the quivering multitudes trembling lest his hand should next reach them. We may wish this was not so; but no ideal creature of our own fancy will alter the world as it is. The Bible explanation of all this we are well acquainted with; it tells us that sorrow, suffering, and death entered into the world by sin; and as we think of the spoliation at this moment going on in the sphere of health, life, and happiness, we say, "Surely an enemy hath done this."

Our only true rest of heart is in the knowledge that the spoiler has found greater than himself, that Christ has spoiled the spoiler, and led captivity captive. The spoiler can do nothing that Christ cannot undo. You may see the spoiler breaking in upon the scene of royal felicity, and a queen weeping over her dead, or some humble peasant sitting by the empty wicker-work cradle where once she rocked her babe; but prince and child must be given back. Standing on the confines of land and sea, the Saviour will speak, and cavern and cathedral, wave and desert, will all give up their dead. You may show me any province of Satan's dominion, and I will show you a conquering Christ. If we have been despoiled of moral health, or peace, or hope, or rest, or joy, these, all intensified a thousand times, we may regain in Jesus Christ. May it not be permitted us, just for a moment, to mark that sin spoils the very best things in the universe of God. A spoiled garment is nothing to a spoiled character, a defaced picture

of Raphael's or Correggio's is nothing to the marred and depraved image of a child of God. "He that sinmeth against me *wrongeth his own soul*." I ask if there can be damage equal in any respect to that which a man does to himself by sin, deadening his conscience, darkening his judgment, corroding his finer instincts, and corrupting his heart? Let us take care how we spoil *ourselves*, or let ourselves be spoiled. There is another lesson, too, in this last sentence. We may be spoiled by flattery, quite as soon as by unfriendly envy and malicious misrepresentation. Public characters often get so spoiled—men who have noble points of excellence, and have been raised by their brethren to places of honour and thrones of power. It is pitiable sometimes to see, however, how little they can bear difference of opinion, and how complacently they forget the motto, "Humanum est errare." It spoils a Royal Academician, or a pet physician, or a popular preacher, or any other man, when he takes for granted that he is infallible. Grown-up men and women may be spoiled, as well as little children. There are not only flatterers in courts and camps, but in the humbler spheres of life; and he is a wise man who tries to counteract the poison of flattery by the consideration of his own marvellous defects. Concerning the spoiling of children, I may have a word to say at a future time; it is enough now to remark that it is an injury done to them, and a wrong to others. There is nothing more detestable than to spend an hour in the presence of a group of spoiled children, whose parents think their noise and racket to be "the beautiful freedom of childhood"—childhood without restraint! They dive their fingers into cream-jugs and sugar-basins, and then climb on to your knees, leaving their paw-marks on your dress. They criticise callers and neighbours, as though they were little John Leech's at limning character, whilst all the time they are bumptious and impudent. A menagerie of loose monkeys would not be a comfortable place to spend a pleasant half-hour in; but commend me to it fifty times before a menagerie of loud, rude, pert little Britons, who "never will be slaves."

One cannot help thinking, in conclusion, of many spoiled things which may, with care, skill,

and time, be restored; but there are some which do not come under this category. Time is the condition under which many such things may be made good; and even the most marred and stained soul may find here on earth renewal and beauty in Jesus Christ. We may, however, spoil ETERNITY—the long, long Eternity—by not being wise in time—by leaving the ruined temple of our nature unrestored by the Great Architect—and by neglecting that which all our energy can never give us any opportunity of restoring hereafter.

The last consideration—which ought to have in it a wealth of comfort for us all—is, that in heaven there will be no possibilities of evil or wrong. Once there, we shall be "without fault" before the throne. Envy, malice, cruelty, censure, satire cannot reach us there. No enemy ever lands on that shore. No spoiler ever surprises the citadel, or steals by a sleeping sentinel. "There shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, or worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life." When I heard a company of children singing, some little while ago, "There is sweet rest in heaven," I could not help thinking of the fact that there will also be one day sweet rest on earth: "The lion shall lie down with the lamb, and a little child shall lead them." Christianity has already done much for this degraded world—it is the strongest moral force in this nineteenth century—but its achievements are only prophecies of something yet to come, when the earth shall be at rest beneath the shadow of the Cross. It is well to remember that we can help to expedite that day, and that we may become recruits in the army of that Saviour who must reign till he hath put all enemies beneath his feet.

Here this Word on Spoiling must close; and, in relation to its human aspect, I may be permitted to wish, dear reader, that your character may never be spoiled by the poison of flattery, or by the rude touch of an unfriendly hand. In many senses, each man is his brother's keeper, and in the long-run he will be beloved and respected most, who has striven, in the course of common life, to avert all the injury he can from, and to do all the good he can to, his brethren in the world.

HOW WE HOLD OUR LANDS.

MANY are the undoubted propositions of English law which, if stated simply, and without explanation, would very much startle the minds of ordinary folk, or be set down by them as extravagant paradoxes. We might begin the present paper with a proposition of this sort, and say,

with perfect legal accuracy, that no man in England is the actual or absolute owner of the lands which he possesses. What! it will be said, are not those old families who for centuries have been in possession of the same lands, whose personal enjoyment of them has never been interrupted, whose claim no one has ever thought of disputing, and who

can dispose of them in whatever manner they think proper, are not they the absolute owners of those lands? Not at all: the idea of absolute ownership is altogether unknown to the English law, and every possessor of lands, no matter what the length of his title, holds only an estate of one sort or another in them; he is not an absolute owner, but merely a tenant.

The reason of this is historical, and springs from that basis of feudalism on which the whole of our law relating to landed property rests since the time of the introduction of the feudal system into England by the Normans. In that system the sovereign was considered as the actual owner of all the land in the kingdom, and his great nobles and others to whom he granted portions of it were only his *tenants*, holding their lands on condition of performing certain services to him, usually of a military character, such as attending him in war with a certain number of soldiers, paying him certain aids, &c. Those who held lands directly from the king, sublet those lands, or portions of them, to others, on condition of the performance of similar services on the part of their tenants: and so all who held lands were but tenants, either of the sovereign, or of some lord who held immediately from the sovereign, and they held them on the condition of the performance of certain services: and the theory of our law as to the ownership of lands is still exactly the same.

But though the services to be rendered were usually of a military nature, they were not always so, and might be of whatever kind the will and fancy of the person granting the lands determined. As a consequence, they were often curious enough, and occasionally somewhat fantastical, especially in cases where the land granted was intended to be practically a gift, but some slight service was nevertheless reserved by the grantor to be performed towards himself, as a badge of his lordship.

To a brief description of some of the more curious of these tenures the present paper will be devoted. The description will occasionally recall some interesting and very little known features of olden English life.

Many held grants of land from the king by performing some service at his coronation, often of a trivial nature; in one case, by pouring water on the king's hands on the day of his coronation; in another, by acting as pantry-keeper to the sovereign on that occasion; in another, by presenting to him a dish of a kind of pottage.

The lord of the manor who held by the last-mentioned species of tenure, brought up his dish of pottage to the table of Charles II. at his coronation, and the Lord Chamberlain presented it to the king. But we are told that, although the Merry

Monarch accepted the service, he did not eat of the pottage.

The Earl of Shrewsbury received from Henry VIII. the lands belonging to one of the dissolved monasteries, on condition of finding the king a right-hand glove at his coronation, and supporting his arm on that day, so long as he should hold his sceptre in his hand.

Dymoke of Scrivelsby held his lands by the tenure of being the sovereign's champion at his coronation; and Sir Henry Dymoke, one of his descendants, discharged the duties of that office at the coronation of George IV. The present Dymoke of Scrivelsby still bears the title of the "Honourable the Queen's Champion." At the coronation of Charles II. the champion, armed at all points in rich armour, mounted on a white charger, and having a plume of blue feathers in his helmet, rode into Westminster Hall. At the lower end of the hall proclamation was made that if any one dared to deny that Charles II. was the rightful successor to the throne, his champion was present, and said that such individual was a liar and traitor; and the champion was ready to adventure his life in combat with him. Thereupon the champion threw down his gauntlet, which, nobody venturing to take it up and accept the challenge, was delivered to him again. This was repeated in the middle, and a third time at the top of the hall. When the third proclamation was finished, and the glove had been finally restored, a gilt cup filled with wine was presented to the king, who drank to his champion, and then sent him the cup. The champion emptied it, and having done so, rode out of the hall, taking with him the cup for his fee.

The number of those who held lands from the king on condition of ministering to his hunting propensities, was very large. The condition of several tenures was, to keep a pack of hounds; of others, to keep goshawks or falcons in readiness for the king's use, whenever he visited that part of the country where the tenant lived; and of others, to present the king with a certain number of arrows when he hunted in particular forests. The lands of Seaton, in Kent, were held by the service of being the King's Vauterer, or Dog-leader, in Gascony, till the owner had worn out a pair of shoes of fourpence price: a rather loose method, one should think, of determining the length of service to be rendered, and dependent to a large extent on the will of the shoemaker. Holding the king's stirrup when he mounted his horse at this or that castle, was a frequent condition of tenure.

Other curious cases are, holding up one's hand before the king on every Christmas Day, wherever in England the king might chance to be; carving before him on that day; acting as his cup-bearer

on Whit-Sunday; presenting him yearly with a pair of scarlet hose. The present to the king was sometimes of a more substantial nature: as a certain number of bottles of wine, or a certain number of pasties of fresh herrings at their first coming in, &c.

A legal writer of the time of Charles II., who amused his leisure hours by collecting the most curious tenures to be met with in the old books, and to whose industry we are indebted for most of what we know on the subject, tells us that he had the curiosity to ask an old officer of the Court of Exchequer whether he remembered any herring-pies having been paid to the king, as the service by which a particular manor in Norfolk was held.—“Yes, very well,” was the officer’s reply. “We had some of them in court among us, last term.” At Stonely, in the county of Warwick, we are told that there were anciently four individuals, each of whom held a certain portion of land by the service of making the gallows, and hanging the thieves of the neighbourhood. A different sort of hanging constituted the service of another tenant of the king, namely, hanging on a forked piece of wood the red-deer that died of the murrain in his forest.

A very peculiar sort of tenure was that by which one Peter de Baldewyn held land in the county of Surrey: he was to go a wool-gathering for the queen, among the thorns and briars; and if he neglected to collect the wool, he was obliged to pay into the Exchequer the sum of twenty shillings per annum. We also meet with such services as that of paying a pair of tongs; and, in another case, a silver needle once a year into the Exchequer of the king. The descendants of the great Duke of Marlborough still hold the grand mansion of Blenheim, which was given him as a national reward for his victories in the reign of Queen Anne, by the tenure of presenting yearly at Windsor, on the anniversary of the battle of Blenheim, a standard, emblazoned with three fleur-de-lis: and a similar tenure, as is well known, exists in the case of the Duke of Wellington.

Conditions of tenure such as the preceding were not confined to lands held directly from the king. Other lords sublet their lands to tenants on conditions of a similar character; such as holding the lord’s stirrup when he mounted his horse; sending him a fat goose on Michaelmas Day, or a chaplet of roses on Midsummer Day, &c. In the reign of King John, William, Earl of Warrenne, lord of the town of Stamford, was standing one day upon his castle walls, and whilst there, saw two bulls fighting in the castle meadows, which lay below him. All the butchers’ dogs of the place pursued one of the bulls, and the animal

maddened with the noise and the multitude of its tormentors, ran furiously through the town. This sight, we are told, so took the fancy of the noble earl, that he gave the castle meadows, where the fight of the bulls began, to the butchers of the town for a common, on condition that they found a mad bull, on the same day in every year, to continue the sport for ever.

The barony of Whichnour, in Stafford, was held by Sir Philip de Somerville from the Earl of Lancaster by a rather peculiar kind of service. It consisted in keeping hung up in his hall a fitch of bacon, ready at all times, except Lent, to be given to every married man or woman a certain time after their marriage, and to every clergyman a certain time after he had become such. The conditions, however, which had to be observed before the claimant could get his fitch of bacon, must have rendered applications to Sir Philip and his successors somewhat rare. The application should be made to the bailiff or porter, who would assign a day for the applicant to return, accompanied by two of his neighbours. On the appointed day, all who “owed services to the baconne” must stand at the gate of Whichnour Manor from sunrise till noon, waiting the coming of him who fetched the bacon. On his coming, chaplets of roses must be presented to him and all the company present, and the claimant of the fitch was led to the hall door, where he should find the lord and his steward, ready to deliver him the bacon. Before he received it, however, his marriage had to be sworn to by his neighbours, and he himself had to take an oath of a very trying nature. Its searching and comprehensive character will be best perceived if we give it in the old spelling and expressive language in which it has been preserved to us. It was, that since his marriage, which must have been a year and a day before the claim for the bacon, he would not have changed his wife for any other woman on earth, “farer ne Fowler, richer ne power, ne for none other descended of greater lynage, sleeping ne waking, at noo time. And if the seid B [his wife] were sole [single] and I sole, I wolde take her to be my wife before all the wymen of the worlde, of what condyon soever they be, good or eyle.” This oath had to be supplemented by that of the two neighbours, that they believed it true, and then the loving husband got his fitch of bacon, and departed amidst a flourish of trumpets. We wonder how many people nowadays could earn the fitch on the same conditions. The same Sir Philip held other lands of the earl by the service of coming to the earl’s castle of Tutbury once a year, to hunt and catch his wild swine, which were sent to the earl’s larder when caught. After doing this, and kissing the porter, Sir Philip was allowed to depart.



(Drawn by EDITH DUNN.)

“ ‘Tis best in early life to have defeated
Grief’s sharpest sting!” —p. 426.

The canons of St. Paul had a tenant who held lands from them on condition of sending, on one occasion in each year, a fat doe, and on another a fat buck, to be offered at the hour of procession at the high altar, and then distributed among the resident canons. The reception of the doe and buck were, down to Elizabeth's time, solemnly performed at the steps of the choir by the canons, attired in their vestments, and wearing garlands of flowers on their heads. The horns of the buck were carried on the top of a spear in solemn procession round the body of the church, attended with a great chorus of horn-blowers.

The grant with which a lord rewarded one of his dependents did not always consist of lands. There is one very curious instance of a different sort of grant, dating from the time of King John. In the reign of that king the Earl of Chester was attacked by the Welsh, and compelled to retreat to a castle in Flintshire, where he was besieged by the enemy. In his distress, he sent a messenger to his constable of Chester, one Roger Lacy, begging that he would come to his assistance. This Roger, who was surnamed "Hell," from his fiery disposition, was at the time engaged in a fair going on at Chester; but, as soon as he received the message, he collected a motley crowd of the noisiest persons at the fair—fiddlers, players, cobblers, and, in fact, everybody that he could induce to join him, women as well as men, and off they all hurried to the assistance of the earl. When the Welsh saw at a distance such a multitude approaching, they raised the siege and fled, and so the earl was rescued. As a reward, the constable received a donation of all the fiddlers, cobblers, and minstrels of the district; and his son conveyed away the right over them to a person named Dutton.

The descendants of this Dutton continued down, at any rate, to the end of Charles II.'s reign, to exercise an authority over the minstrels of the county of Cheshire; and a court was held annually

by the lord or his deputy, at which licences to the minstrels for that county were given and renewed. And so carefully was this grant observed, that, although a statute of Elizabeth's reign declared all fiddlers to be rogues, a special proviso excepted from that disreputable title the fiddlers of Cheshire who were licensed by Dutton of Dutton.

It remains to say a word about the clergy, and the manner in which they held their land. Their tenure of land was called *frankalmoign*, or free alms, and the services which they were to perform were, as might be expected, generally of a spiritual nature—such as praying for the souls of the grantor and his heirs. They enjoyed a privilege accorded to no other holders of lands, in being exempt from doing fealty to the lords from whom the lands were received; because, as an old authority tells us, the prayers and divine services of the tenants were better for the lords than any doing of fealty. It was by this sort of tenure that almost all the ancient religious houses held their lands; and by the same species of tenure the parochial clergy, and many ecclesiastical establishments hold them at the present day. An Act of Parliament, passed in the reign of Charles II., abolished most of the feudal services incident to the tenure of land, services generally of a very vexatious nature, which the sovereign and other lords exacted from their tenants. But this statute expressly excepts from its repealing clauses all services of a purely honorary nature, such as are principally referred to in this paper, and also the tenure of *frankalmoign*, by which the clergy, for the most part, hold their lands; so that these remain as they were before; and the fundamental maxim on which the whole of our law relating to landed property is based still continues the same: The sovereign is still, in theory, the owner of all the land in the kingdom, and all others are but tenants, holding their estates either directly or indirectly from him.

EARLY SORROW.

MO morn has broken destitute of sorrow;
No night but brings some weary heart
relief;
No day but finds us longing for the morrow:
There must be grief!

No happy eyes, unstained by fire of weeping,
Can grasping death with icy fingers close;
No life but sees the gloom of sadness creeping
Before repose.

Soft dew of tears on graves is ever falling;
With tears are little infants kissed to life;
In tears, strong men and women are recalling
A broken life!

To young and old life's bitterness is meted;
And since to children's hearts its fibres cling,
'Tis best in early life to have defeated
Grief's sharpest sting!

CLEMENT W. SCOTT.

DEEPDALE VICARAGE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "MARK WARREN."

CHAPTER LXXXII.

PHIL "UPON THE SCENT."

WELL, I've been six weeks at Tom Crutchley's, and not seen a vestige of him—the villain! And yet the landlord said he was sure he went to London. I don't believe the landlord knew anything about it! What did he care? He has never seen—Mrs. Melrose."

These last two words, "Mrs. Melrose," were pronounced in an undertone by Phil. Phil, leaning his elbows on the toilette table, and his head on his hands, apparently staring at himself in the glass. But he was not thinking of himself at all, save in conjunction with two prominent ideas—Mrs. Melrose, and the wretch who had stolen the old vicar's money.

The prosecution had been at fault. At present nothing was done. The false name had set everybody on a wrong scent. Besides, no such person as the man described by Phil had been seen in the usual beat of travellers.

Reginald Chauncey had been too cunning for that. He had journeyed by night, and carefully kept out of sight. At present, he was in no wise identified with Richard Canning. Who would think of searching for a thief in Reginald Chauncey's set?

Reginald himself was laughing in his sleeve. He did not for a moment suppose that Frank would prosecute him. Or, indeed, that his self-interest would allow him.

"No one else can do me any harm," thought he, "except—" and he shuddered as he remembered the pair of menacing eyes.

The thought of those eyes, and the general apprehension of a guilty conscience, led him to resolve to quit England as speedily as he could. But he did not intend to wander forth a penniless man. He was playing a bold game, and if it answered, he could travel abroad in great luxury, until such time as all fear was at an end. And his game had reached that critical moment, when the next move might leave him the winner.

Phil and his adherents had beaten the country, in all directions, round Deepdale. But meeting with no success, and hearing a rumour from the landlord that the *gentleman*, as he persisted in calling him, had gone to London, Phil set off, suddenly, to Lord Crutchley's house in Grosvenor Square. Here he had remained ever since, industriously looking, as his friend, Tom Crutchley, Lord Crutchley's younger brother, observed, "for a needle in a bottle of hay."

"As if he hadn't gone off to Australia by this time!" added he, for Phil's consolation.

Phil did not think he had. He could not divest himself of his pet idea, his grand scheme of bringing the culprit to justice.

"I should not so much have minded, if it had not been—" said he, continuing his soliloquy before the glass. "Ah! she is a beauty. As soon as I come of age, I mean to marry her!"

Meaning Mrs. Melrose.

"Phil, Phil! are you coming?" and a succession of loud knocks at the door broke the thread of his meditations. "Do you know what time it is? Have you forgotten Mrs. Stopford's party?"

"I don't think I have," replied Phil, slowly, his mind being still in the land of dreams.

"Come, then, be quick! we are waiting for you. Shall I send my man to help you?"

Tom Crutchley was fourteen last birthday.

"I don't want your man!" growled Phil, thrusting himself into his dress coat, and giving his shock of hair a rough and rapid stroke or two with the brush. "I'm ready!"

Tom Crutchley, a slim, dapper young gentleman, dressed in the height of fashion, glanced at the short, grotesque frame of the other lad. Then he shrugged his shoulders.

"Come along then. I suppose you must do as you like."

It was a dark night, and rainy. The carriage, with its flaming lights, stood at the door to convey the young party to their evening's entertainment. There was Tom Crutchley's sister, Tom Crutchley, and Phil—nobody else. Tom Crutchley's sister, a little girl with flaxen curls, was a favourite with Phil. As all kinds of vehicles drove by them in the street, she kept calling to him to look.

"There, Phil! do you see that?—look, look!"

Presently a cab, hindered by the press of other vehicles, passed slowly by, almost touching them. The person within the cab put his head out of the window to see what was the matter.

It was a handsome head, with well-arranged hair, and a pair of bold, bright eyes. The eyes looked straight at Phil.

It happens so sometimes in life, that one unguarded moment may be our destruction.

Phil, with a suddenness that made the blood rush tumultuously over his whole body, was face to face with the man who had taken the old vicar's money—face to face, his eyes looking into the eyes of the other!

The next few minutes were more like a hurried scene upon the stage than real life. A shout, a forcing open of the carriage door, a headlong leap, a rush—on, on, with clenched fists and eyes staring from their sockets! Such was Phil, in close, hot pursuit of Reginald Chauncey!

In vain the friends he had left called to him to stop. In vain they entreated him to come back. He was gone!

Lord Crutchley's sister burst into tears. But

Tom Crutchley himself understood it better, and was more easily consoled.

"He's a regular ratcatcher, that's what he is!" said he; "and I dare say he has got scent of the man."

And Tom ordered the coachman to drive on without him.

CHAPTER LXXXIII.

THE MENACING EYES.

REGINALD CHAUNCEY'S smooth, false face was like a mask. Among his set he was never seen without that smile playing about his mouth. The power he had over the lines and muscles that would else be too prominent, the ability to rule and to charm, were attainments made by long and careful training. He was a man for, and of, the world. In those moments of which the world knew and cared little he was another being. Had his set seen him at this juncture, it would hardly have recognised him. Leaning back in the hired carriage in which he rode, with haggard, guilty brow, ghastly cheek, and scared eyes, how could they have known him? Could this be Reginald Chauncey?

It was strange this thing should haunt him! Who was it? Where was its home? Had it come forth only to foil and to wreck him? He feared nothing on earth save those menacing eyes!

He had won his game. It was sure to be so. A weak, vain woman, and a Reginald Chauncey! He had met her in London. His was the first face that greeted her on her arrival. And then, in order to carry on the courtship, as it behoved a man of his position, he had gone to his hotel. *His hotel!*—so he told Miss Barbara. He had always been accustomed to go there, and the master of the hotel would not have had him transfer his patronage for the world!

These, and other speeches of like import, confirmed Miss Barbara in the belief that her nephew had been trying to deceive her.

"Of course he wishes me to keep unmarried, for his sake!" said she, indignantly.

And the idea so much incensed her, that she put a letter of his, which reached her the next morning, into the fire without opening it. A foolish act on the part of Miss Barbara.

Reginald had followed up the lady with great adroitness. He had played by turns with her vanity, and by turns with her self-will. He had at length obtained a promise from her to bestow her hand upon the "long-tried friend"—so he styled himself—of her nephew.

He did not expect Sir Peter to approve. Of course not! A lady with such attractions might be expected to look far higher than himself, in order to satisfy the ambition of her family. And yet he came of an old stock, he told her—as old as any in England! He was not rich—he sighed as he said it. Fortune, which had given him gentle blood, had been niggardly of her other favours. He was not rich. And he put on a look of touching humility. He could afford to be humble to a woman.

Miss Barbara, stimulated by opposition, made light of this drawback. She had wealth enough for both, she told him, in her infatuation.

It was the dusk of evening when she made the assertion, and the chandelier was not yet lighted. If it had been, she might have seen the mocking curve that for a moment disfigured the mouth of her admirer. He had been into the City to buy Miss Barbara a ring. He was in capital spirits. He had told her he should take her to Venice for her wedding trip.

"Delightful!" cried Miss Barbara, clasping her hands.

He was leaning back in his cab, indulging in visions of his future wealth, when, putting his face up to the window, all unconscious and unconcerned, he saw, looking full at him, with a vivid recognition in the look, the eyes—yes, the eyes that had haunted him—the eyes which had seen him come from Deepdale Vicarage!

That being, whoever he was, had Reginald's fate in his hands. That being could criminate him—could stand up in the sight of all the world and say, "Here is the man who was guilty of the theft!"

He shivered from head to foot. He hurried on the driver, and, in his fear and rage, uttered words that can on no account be repeated. Still the shock might prove a warning. It was evident that danger was abroad. The ground beneath his feet might prove to be a quicksand. It was not safe to remain in England. It would be wiser to hasten on the marriage, and put the sea, as quickly as he could, between himself and the country whose laws he had broken.

"I wish I had not done it," thought Reginald, musingly. "It was a paltry crime, and I gained nothing, save to have the consequences suspended over me for ever!"

He did not think of the moral, only the legal, consequences of the act. He mourned not for the broken law of his Maker, or for bringing down an old man's grey hairs with sorrow to the grave, or for blasting the character of Clara Melrose. He was unprincipled and selfish. He cared for none of these things.

Still, the panic was upon him. He was shaken and agitated. And when the cab stopped, and the hall door opened, letting out its blaze of light and warmth, he hurried in, not daring to look either to the right or to the left, lest the eyes that haunted him should glare upon him from out the darkness.

The tremor had not left him when he stepped up the broad staircase—when he was ushered into the drawing-room, brilliant with its many lights. No; it had not left him then! It lingered when Miss Barbara advanced to meet him. His arm trembled as he led her down to dinner. As he sat, costly viands and wine before him, he could not drown his care, or allay his apprehension. When the banquet was over, came the long evening that was to have been made delicious by the confidences of love. But was it so? Did not the craven heart within belie the bold, brave words?

Was he not haunted by the dread of an unseen evil?

Ah! the terrors of a guilty conscience are great indeed!

At length the time came for his departure. He had persuaded Miss Barbara, ere another week was over, to consent to be his bride. Poor Miss Barbara! smiling on the edge of a precipice darker and more deadly than any earthly chasm can be! Poor Miss Barbara! saying, with a show of tenderness, to this man, a criminal as yet untaken, one over whom a felon's doom was impending—

"Good night, dearest! Be sure you come tomorrow!"

Reginald smiled pleasantly. He said adieu, with his usual jaunty air. In spite of his inward perturbation, he had not shown a single particle of fear. He had smoothed down the lines and furrows resolutely, and, as yet, they were smoothed down. His false, handsome face shone bravely in the light of the lamp which saw the last of him, ere the great hall door was shut on him, and on the darkness.

It was very dark, and had become tempestuous. A gale was blowing, and the gas-lamps rocked to and fro. The wind had almost carried him off his feet. Holding his hat with his hands, and still not daring to look to the right or to the left, he fled into his cab, as into a place of refuge. And the door was shut, and off the cab rattled, at a quick pace, towards Reginald's hotel.

What is that on the seat opposite? His face becomes ghastly, and the big drops burst from his forehead. His very hair seemed to stand on end! Just opposite, are the menacing eyes!

CHAPTER LXXXIV.

"O GUILT! GUILT!"

Phil had found the man! Eagerly as Reginald Chauncey had fled from the scene of danger, Phil had pursued him full as eagerly. He had seen him enter Miss Barbara's house, had watched doggedly and unweariedly. He cared neither for wind nor rain. Folding his arms, he paced up and down, his face inflexible, his eyes glittering.

Not with vengeance—no! but with a keen, steady resolve to have the man brought to justice; the man who had inflicted so much misery on the gentle spirit of Clara Melrose!

When the cab drove up which was to take Reginald to his hotel, Phil came forward. A few minutes' colloquy with the driver, and a fee slipped into his hand, settled the business. Phil took his seat in the cab and waited for Reginald to come out.

Phil was a true Landon. He knew no fear. Had it been otherwise, he need not have felt the slightest alarm. Reginald Chauncey was completely in his power.

The man seemed as if paralysed. Not Phil alone, but outraged justice confronted him. He made no attempt to expel the intruder. He hung his craven head. His cold clammy hands clutched each other

in his agony. He was spell-bound—fascinated by those terrible eyes. Was there no escape?

Once he seemed about to make the effort. He put out his hand as if to let down the glass; but another hand was there before him—a powerful muscular hand, with which it would be difficult to deal. And Reginald Chauncey, as if in sheer despair, remained immovable. He knew that if he tried to struggle his fate was sealed. One false move, and the secret that hung on Phil's lips would burst forth. One attempt to gain his liberty, and that sinewy hand would be laid upon him. All he could hope for was from his native craft and subtlety.

By this time he had surveyed his opponent. True, the massive chest, broad shoulders, and sinewy hands were formidable. Still, he was young. Reginald felt his courage revive. "Surely," thought he, "I am a match for a mere boy!"

Presently, the hotel was gained, its doors standing hospitably open, its lights streaming from its windows.

"If I can get him to my room quietly, all will be well," thought Reginald.

"If he resists, I shall raise the house about his ears!" thought Phil.

He did not mean to have him arrested on the spot. He meant to keep the fate of his prisoner in his hands a little longer. He had a curiosity to hear what he had to say.

He was on his guard, however. When they left the cab, and entered a room on the ground floor, he closed the door and planted his broad back against it. He and Reginald Chauncey were alone!

It was a handsome room, and well furnished. There was a fire, and the gas was lighted, but it burnt low. It had been put down during Reginald's absence.

Now that Reginald Chauncey had reached his hotel in safety, and some respite was afforded him, he recovered the effrontery of his nature. Flaring up the gas as high as it would go, he stared insolently at Phil.

"Well," said he, speaking for the first time, "I hope you have enjoyed your ride, young gentleman."

Phil made no reply.

"Staying at the hotel, young gentleman?" continued Reginald, throwing himself into an easy chair with the utmost coolness.

Phil shook his head.

"Having had the pleasure of your company without solicitation," resumed Reginald, in the same jaunty tone, "may I be allowed to ask what is your name?"

Phil took a card from his pocket and threw it on the table.

Reginald picked it up and read it.

"Lord Landon. Hump!" and rising, he made a profound bow. "Irish family, I presume?"

Phil nodded.

"Well, my Lord Landon, of course I am delighted to make your acquaintance. But may I inquire,

since the hour is late, and I am tired, what it is you want with me?"

His voice had a tremor in it, in spite of his efforts to steady it.

"Richard Canning," said the young lord, advancing a few paces, "my business is to have you arrested for robbery!"

"Indeed! but you see I am not Richard Canning. Richard Canning is not my name." His lips quivered as he said it, and he wiped a trickling drop from his forehead.

"No matter," cried Phil, boldly. "I do not care by what name you call yourself. I only know that *you are the man!*"

Reginald's face was white as marble. The pulses in his temples throbbed convulsively.

"*You are the man!*" repeated Phil, confronting him with the same steady gaze. "I can swear to you anywhere, and *I will!*"

"I do not know what you mean," stammered Reginald, cowering beneath the glance of the other.

"I saw you come out of Deepdale Vicarage, after you had stolen the old vicar's money!"

O guilt! guilt! how it paralyses the arm! how it unnerves the whole frame! how it makes a man the veriest coward upon earth! He did not attempt to reply. He put up his hands to hide his ashy face.

"I saw you when you were at the inn—after you had been thrown from your horse. I saw you when you were walking in the garden. I can swear to you anywhere, and *I will!*"

The indomitable resolution of the last two words it is impossible to describe.

The wretched man cowered still lower. He sat crouching, his face bent downwards, his fingers grasping his ruffled hair. Could this be the gay, the fascinating, the gallant Reginald Chauncey, the life and soul of his set?

There was an interval of silence. At length Reginald lifted up his head and looked.

Yes, he was there! standing like a sentinel who could never tire. Standing, until presently the thought seemed to madden him. The expression that passed over his features was frightful to behold.

"Do you see this?" and he drew something bright from his pocket.

"Yes," said Phil, coolly.

"And do you see that window? Will you let me open it and escape? If you do not——"

And he pointed the pistol deliberately at Phil.

Phil stood immovable. Not a hair stirred, not an eyelid wincing.

"If you do not, I will shoot you! Will you let me go?"

"No!" thundered Phil.

For one instant, Reginald held the pistol aimed direct, his finger on the trigger. Then, he laid it down.

"I will not hurt you," said he. "I am not bad enough for that."

And he gave up all hope of working on Phil's fears. Phil had none.

"I confess I am the man," he continued, after a pause; "it is useless to deny it. But I ask your mercy. I cannot think that, at your age, you intend to ruin me!"

Phil was silent, but his look was enough. It was a look which showed not an atom of relenting.

Again Reginald bent down his guilty head; again his fingers clutched his perfumed locks, now in unwanted disorder.

At length he glanced at Phil. Phil, standing stern and inflexible. Any moment, the deed might be done, and his fate be sealed. The thought drove him to desperation. He held out his hands imploringly.

"I have told you, I confess the deed. I will go away quietly, and be seen and heard of no more. I will leave the country."

Phil laid his hand on the lock of the door. Ere he had time to open it—in the one single second, that stood between him and his doom, the wretched culprit was on his knees.

"Spare me!" cried he; "spare me for the sake of my son!"

Phil paused.

"He is young, and is struggling hard to live down my vices. There is not a spot upon his character. This will blast his prospects, and be his ruin! You know my son——"

"I know your son!" cried Phil, drawing back with an expression of disgust.

"Yes!" continued the suppliant, eagerly, and as if catching at his last hope on earth. "You know him well! His name is Frank Chauncey!"

* * * * *

The Crutchleys sat up for their friend till morning, and even then Phil did not come home. When at length he did make his appearance, and was questioned by Tom as to what he had been doing, he answered nothing, except that it was all of no use, and he should go home to-morrow. By which Tom concluded that the hunting for the needle in the bottle of hay had been a failure, and was given up.

Another person waited and watched, but it was for Reginald Chauncey. He came no more to make the heart of Miss Barbara flutter with a thousand fascinations. He was gone, mysteriously, and, as far as she was concerned, for ever. No word of explanation was received to throw light upon his fate. In vain his set, inconsolable for the loss of its most brilliant ornament, made a diligent and energetic search. In vain Sir Peter, shocked and mystified, joined in these inquiries. Reginald Chauncey had passed away from his sphere, and was seen no more.

Miss Barbara, whose vanity was more wounded than her affection, consoled herself by marrying a friend and neighbour of Sir Peter's, and ended her days more happily than might have been expected.

Sir Peter, too, consoled himself by thinking that, though he was "sorry for poor Chauncey," yet it was the best thing that could happen—his taking himself out of the way. Meaning, as far as his Aunt Barbara was concerned.

(To be concluded.)

AUNTIE'S GRAVE.

AUNTIE in heaven, the other day,
When my heart was weary with sighing,
I went in the evening hour to pray
By the grave where you are lying.

In vain I scanned the tombs around,
That told of the rich and holy,
Till I found thee, as thou wert ever found,
Among the poor and the lowly.

No stone to speak, with pallid face,
A lie above thy pillow;
No urn, where bends with courtly grace
The ceremonial willow:

But softly, as by angels led,
Were winds of evening blowing;

And lightly sprinkled o'er thy bed
A race of daisies growing.

Sweet spot! I lingered long in prayer
And reverie beside it;
And blessed the flowers scattered there,
That spread their leaves to hide it.

And if I could not help but weep,
'Twas with a softened sorrow,
As I thought of the gentle saint asleep,
Waiting her glorious morrow!

Dear, humble grave—strive as ye may,
Ye flowers, to wreath and bind it,
His angels, in that final day,
Will well know where to find it!

A. W. HUME-BUTLER.

THE APPLE-BLOSSOM; OR, "I FORGOT IT."

OH, papa, papa! Cousin Mary has come," exclaimed Jessie Wilmot, skipping into the room where her father sat writing.

"Jessie, how many times have I told you to come into the room quietly, instead of rushing in like a wild girl?"

"I forgot, papa," said Jessie, hanging her head.

"I wish my little daughter would not so often forget what she is told," said Mr. Wilmot.

"I will begin to try and remember," said Jessie. "I came to ask if we might go into the orchard and play under the apple-trees? It is so warm in the meadow, and there is no nice place for a romp in the garden."

"May I trust you in the orchard?" said her father. "Will you remember that the trees are not to be touched, and that no balls are to be thrown up among the branches, for fear of knocking off the blossom?"

"Yes, papa, I will not forget this time. May I have the key?"

"Yes, my dear; and keep near the gate. Don't go down by the wall near the lane, or you may do some mischief to the young trees growing there."

Jessie promised all that her father had told her, and to keep her cousin and brothers from touching the fruit-trees.

A few minutes afterwards, Mr. Wilmot saw the merry group rush past the window on their way to the orchard. "I hope they will not go near those new trees," he said, half aloud, and a shade of anxiety might have been detected in his tone.

Away ran Jessie and her companions, and a scramble took place when they reached the gate to see which should get in first.

"You mustn't push so, Arthur," said Jessie, trying to put the key in the lock. "Oh! I have forgot," she exclaimed, facing round.

"What have you forgot now, Jess?" said her brother; "you're always forgetting something."

"Why, papa says I'm to take care you don't touch any of the trees."

"Take care you don't touch 'em yourself, Miss Forget-it," responded her brother.

"Well, you hear what I say."

"Yes; and you hear what I say, Miss Jess: Take care you don't touch them yourself."

"As if I should now, after papa has told me not," she said, in a half-offended tone. "Come, Mary, don't notice what those boys say;" and they all went into the orchard.

They enjoyed themselves thoroughly, running and jumping on the grass in the shade of the trees, until at length they were glad to sit down and rest. But this did not last long; Jessie soon jumped up, and asked her cousin to go for a quiet walk.

"We don't want you boys with us," she said. "I want to tell Mary a secret," and throwing her arm around her cousin's shoulders, the two sauntered away.

They walked on until they reached the low wall and iron railings that separated the orchard from the lane. They could just see over the wall and between the railings, and they stood for some minutes looking through.

"Oh! look at that poor little boy, how ill he looks!" exclaimed Jessie, pointing to a child coming up the lane with his sister.

They stopped just before they came to where Jessie was standing, and the girl said, pointing to the apple-trees, "There's pretty flowers, Johnny!" Johnny clapped his hands with delight at the sight of the delicate pink and white blossoms. Jessie heard it, and, without waiting another moment, she darted off to the nearest tree, which happened to be a small one, and picked the only bunch of blossoms there was on it, and in another minute Johnny had it in his hand, while his sister poured out her thanks to Jessie for her kindness.

Scarcely, however, had the girl moved away when Mary rejoined her cousin. "I thought you said we were not to touch any of the trees," she whispered, seeing the boys were coming. "I should have reminded you, only you were so quick; the blossom was broken off before I could get near you," she added, seeing Jessie's blank look.

"Don't say anything just now," whispered Jessie. "Papa won't mind if I tell him the child wanted the flowers—and he did want them," she added; "he stretched out his hands for some directly he saw them."

"Now, you girls, how much farther are you going to walk?" called Arthur. "Here, make haste back, the tea-ball has rung ever so long ago." They hastened back upon hearing these words. At the orchard gate they met Mr. and Mrs. Wilmot, with some friends, waiting for admittance.

"Make haste in to tea, children; you are late," said Mrs. Wilmot.

They were soon seated at the tea-table, and had nearly finished their meal, when they were attracted to the window by the sound of loud screams.

"Whatever can be the matter?" said the impulsive Jessie, jumping up from her seat. "Oh! it is the girl we saw in the lane," she exclaimed; "and I do believe the little boy is in a fit," and she rushed out of the room, as the girl, accompanied by a policeman, passed the window.

"Oh! what is the matter?" exclaimed Jessie, when she reached the back door, where the girl was standing, sobbing, and crying.

It was some time before any one could understand anything beyond the fact, that little Johnny was in a strong fit. They took him from his sister's arms, and put him into a warm bath, and used every exertion to restore him; but when at length the doctor arrived, he said life had been extinct some minutes.

When Mr. Wilmot made inquiries of the policeman, it appeared that he had stopped the girl, and asked her where she had got the apple-blossom, as he knew it by its peculiarity to belong to Mr. Wilmot. She said it had been given to the child by a little girl; but he said he could not believe that story, and she must come with him to Mr. Wilmot, as he had received orders to look after these choice fruit-trees. The girl was frightened, and instantly burst into tears, and attempted to run away, but was prevented. This so frightened the child that he uttered a piercing scream, and fell back in a fit. He had had

several fits before, some months previously, the girl said; but it was hoped he was recovering from them.

"And who did give you the flowers, my girl?" said Mr. Wilmot, kindly.

"That young lady, sir," she said, between her sobs, pointing to Jessie. "Oh! my mother—my mother!" she added, "what will she say when she hears poor Johnny is dead, and all through a bit of apple-blossom?"

"Oh, papa! what can I do?" said Jessie, sobbing likewise. "I have killed little Johnny; it's all my fault—all through my forgetting what you told me."

It was a bitter lesson for poor Jessie, and one that she never afterwards forgot; and now, whenever she hears the excuse made, "I forgot it," she calls to mind, and often relates, the painful incident of the apple-blossom.

E. B.

KEY. TO ENIGMA ON PAGE 336.

"None is good, save One."—Luke xviii. 19.

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| 1. N obah | Numb. xxxii. 42. |
| 2. O ded | 2 Chron. xv. 8. |
| 3. N ahshon | Numb. vii. 12. |
| 4. E lisha | 2 Kings xiii. 21. |
| 5. I taly | Acts xviii. 2. |
| 6. S aph | 2 Sam. xxi. 13. |
| 7. G aash | Judg. ii. 9. |
| 8. O rman's | 1 Chron. xxi. 15. |
| 9. O ded | 2 Chron. xxviii. 9. |
| 10. D an | Gen. xiv. 14. |
| 11. S eraiah | Jer. li. 59. |
| 12. A havah | Ezra viii. 21. |
| 13. V ashti | Esth. i. 12. |
| 14. E zel | 1 Sam xx. 19. |
| 15. O mri's | 2 Kings viii. 26. |
| 16. N aomi | Ruth i. 3. |
| 17. E thiopians | 2 Chron. xiv. 12. |

SCRIPTURE ACROSTIC.

THE GOVERNOR OF AN ISLAND.

1. The wife of a tentmaker.
2. The country where Job lived.
3. The name given to the inhabitants of Gibeah.
4. An inhabitant of Cyrene.
5. One who is described as a "strong ass couching down between two burdens."
6. The name of one whom a king killed in order to obtain his wife.
7. An Egyptian whom a king of Israel called to his aid against the Assyrians.

NOTICE.—In our next Number will be commenced a New Tale, by the popular Author of "Deepdale Vicarage," entitled—

"THE HALF-SISTERS,"

Also the following New Serial Works:—

"ROUND THE COURT."

By a Rent-Collector.

"THE HISTORY OF THE ANTI-PAPAL MOVEMENT IN THE ITALIAN CHURCH."

By Aurelio Saffi.